

Emmetsburg Wants To Be An Iowa Great Place

by Jane Whitmore

Three "Iowa Great Places" will be named next month and Emmetsburg hopes to be one of them.

For the past several months, a group of Emmetsburg residents has been preparing a presentation to have 5th Island Rustic Retreat become an Iowa Great Place. Judges were in Emmetsburg last Thursday to view the presentation.

"It's important to show the state of Iowa the natural beauty that we have in Emmetsburg," said Community Developer Steve Heldt. "By taking these people out to show them 5th Island, the serenity and beauty that we sometimes take for granted, was our

focus for an Iowa Great Place."

In addition to the island retreat, the proposal included a walking, hiking, biking trail on the east side of Five Island Lake.

"Many thanks to all who worked so hard to make this a successful visit for the Citizen Advisory Board for Iowa Great Places," said Heldt. "We will know in a couple of weeks if we are, indeed, an Iowa Great Place."

Bill Menner of Grinnell told the group, "There is not a beginning and

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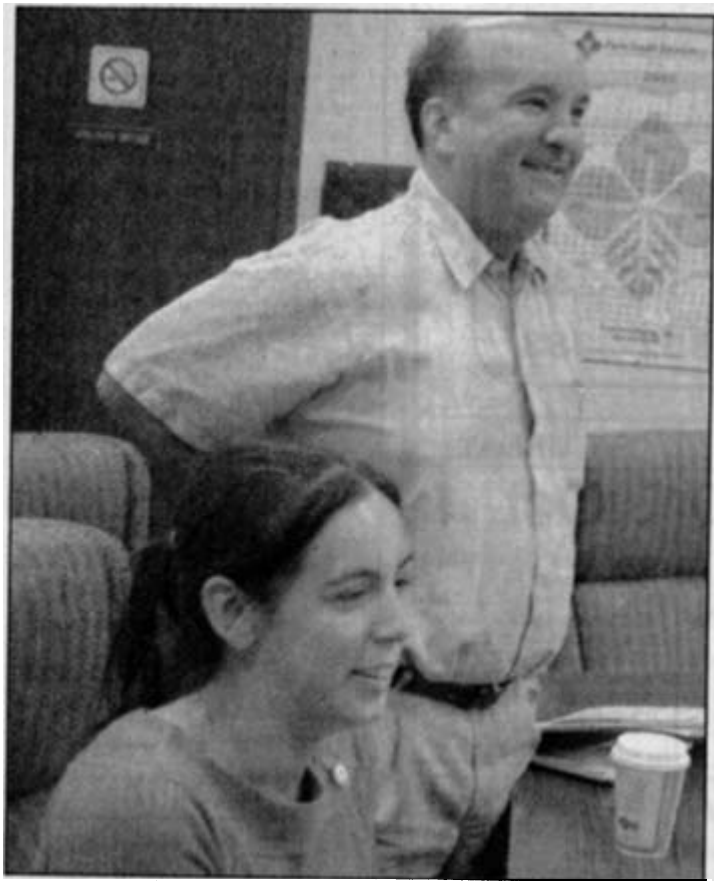


5TH ISLAND RUSTIC RETREAT is Emmetsburg's vision of an Iowa Great Place. A group of Emmetsburg residents gathered at City Hall for the indoors presentation, then the judges were given a

pontoon ride to 5th Island. Part of the presentation was a possible semi-truck billboard (pictured in background) designed by Laura Blanchet and Ruth Hand of Emmetsburg. --Jane Whitmore photos



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GREAT PLACES judges Amanda Styron of Mount Pleasant (seated) and Bill Menner of Grinnell were in Emmetsburg last Thursday to view the 5th Island Rustic Retreat presentation.

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an end to Great Places. There will be three pilot places named, but within the next year we may be able to sit down with others and the 18 government agencies who can provide partial funding to name other Iowa Great Places. These are all active, vibrant projects."

Amanda Styron added, "You are winning right now. By putting this project together, a lot of dreams will come true for a lot of people. I like the concept of 'Come to the Islands.'"

She added, "We are looking for communities that are absolutely primed and ready to go (with their projects). We want to show the legislators what's out there."

From the dozen members of the citizen Advisory Board for Iowa Great Places, Bill Menner and Amanda Styron are the only two that come from small towns.

"As you look at these communities and see what they have done in preparation, you must know that we will get our project done," said City Administrator John Bird.

Emmetsburg's proposal includes a 2.6 mile, 10-foot wide concrete biking, hiking and walking trail that would be located on the east side of the lake.

The 5th Island Rustic Retreat targets canoe and kayak enthusiasts, with few modifications to the island. Rip-rapping the island will be completed to prevent beach erosion, fire rings and picnic tables will be added.